

9/11

Public Discourse Project

June 16, 2005

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The Honorable Donald H. Rumsfeld
Secretary of Defense
The Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-0001

Dear Secretary Rumsfeld:

We write with respect to last year's final report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (the 9/11 Commission) and subsequent legislative action, including Public Law 108-458 (The Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004).

Specifically, we are interested in actions by the Department of Defense to implement the recommendations of the Commission and relevant portions of PL 108-458.

The purpose of our inquiry is to assess the performance of departments and agencies of the government—both through panel discussions and the issuance of a “report card” to the public on the Commission’s recommendations one year later—on steps taken to make the American people safer and more secure.

We would appreciate your comments specifically on steps taken at the Department of Defense this past year, separately or as part of the interagency, in response to the following Commission recommendations:

- “the U.S. government must identify and prioritize actual or potential terrorist sanctuaries. For each, it should have a strategy to keep possible terrorists insecure and on the run, using all elements of national power;
- “the United States should engage other nations in developing a comprehensive coalition strategy against Islamic terrorism;
- “the United States should engage its friends to develop a common coalition approach toward the detention and humane treatment of captured terrorists;

- “the current position of Director of Central Intelligence should be replaced by a National Intelligence Director with two main areas of responsibility: (1) to oversee national intelligence centers on specific subjects of interest across the U.S. government and (2) to manage the national intelligence program and oversee the agencies that contribute to it;
 - “lead responsibility for directing and executing paramilitary operations, whether clandestine or covert, should shift to the Defense Department; and
 - “The Department of Defense and its oversight committees should regularly assess the adequacy of Northern Command’s strategies and planning to defend the United States against military threats to the homeland.”

We appreciate very much your time and attention, and welcome any additional observations you wish to make. We do not seek to duplicate the reporting requirements of PL 108-458; our purpose is to inform the American public of steps underway to protect them. We would appreciate your reply by August 15, 2005.

On behalf of the former Commissioners, we would also like to invite you to meet with us, privately or publicly, to discuss these topics.

Should you or your office have any questions, please feel free to contact us directly or through the 9/11 Public Discourse Project.

With best regards,

Thomas H. Kean

Lee H. Hamilton

CC: Andrew H. Card, Jr.